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## MASSORETIC STUDIES.

## III.

*The Division into Verses.*1. *Age of the Division into Verses.*

It is known that the older form of the Biblical text is contained in the scrolls as used in the Synagogues; all external additions which were not admitted in such scrolls are of comparatively later origin. The text of the Torah authorized to be used in the Synagogal service shows the division into books and sections, but not the division into verses. The former division, the *Parashas*, are therefore of greater age than the latter, the *Pesukim*. The text had first been divided into sections according to the contents, and afterwards subdivided into sentences; the division progressed from the greater to the smaller. For the same reason it may be confidently asserted that the subdivision of the verses themselves into smaller portions, according to the sense, has followed, and not preceded, the division into verses; the complete verse is older than the half-verse. The analysis of the text has progressed gradually from a division into books to one into sections, verses, and half-verses.

As the books and sections of the Pentateuch are severally marked in the scrolls used in the Synagogues by empty spaces, and the various verses are not so distinguished, there can be no doubt that the former division hails from pre-Talmudic times, otherwise it would not have been introduced in these scrolls; just as little as the division into verses, which was already known to the oldest traditions that have come down to us. From an historical point of view the *Parashas*, and the division into five books of the Pentateuch, must therefore be called pre-historic. From this it by no means follows, however, that the division into verses first arose in historical times, which, in this case, means the first century of the common era. A distinction must be made between the division into verses and its external indication. The beginning and end of each verse have been marked by external signs only in post-Talmudical times, and yet we find the older Tanaites already speak of separate verses, and there can be no question that even the oldest Tanaites were acquainted with them. It is pure chance that no maxims have been

handed down in their name in evidence of this fact. The counting of the verses, and, consequently, the division into verses, is in Kiddushin, 30 a, attributed to the Soferim. It is therefore beyond doubt that this process took place at a period to which the tradition of the Tanaites does not reach up. The proofs of these assertions will be adduced in the course of our inquiry.

The information afforded by tradition cannot, therefore, fully answer this question. A. Dillmann has condensed the results of the previous investigations in the following sentence: "There is no evidence to show whether larger or smaller sentences were separated in writing; it was certainly not done regularly; but probably occasionally, and in special cases (on the Mesha stone), by means of a vertical stroke, and in poetry verses and parts of verses seem to have been usually marked by distinct lines, for even at a later time poems were written always after that fashion; and with other nations, for instance the Arabians, this mode of writing poetry dates from antiquity<sup>1</sup>." D. H. Müller, in his latest work<sup>2</sup>, expresses himself much more confidently: "I believe myself able to maintain, and in certain cases also to prove, that the Prophets in writing down their speeches divided them in lines or verses."

Even if Dillmann's and Müller's opinions be correct, the question remains, whether in Hebrew prose also the text was divided into separate verses? The idea that this might have been effected by means of a vertical stroke, must, I think, be discarded, for no trace of such distinction can be found either in the text of the Bible, or in the older traditional literature. If the text of the Torah had ever possessed such signs to divide the sentences, they could not have been so thoroughly eliminated from it as not to leave some reminiscence at least in the tradition. It is true M. Friedmann<sup>3</sup> wanted to infer from Soferim, 3, 7 (vi. ed. Müller = Sefer Tora, 3, 4), the existence of a division by means of a vertical stroke, but without sufficient ground. For, in the first place, ספר שפסקו does not necessarily mean a stroke, it means merely a division, which might have been effected by an empty space; and, secondly, this prohibition, which is to be found neither in the Talmud, nor in the Midrash, may have originated only at the time when the signs for the vowels and accents came to be developed, and cannot therefore serve as an evidence of antiquity.

<sup>1</sup> Herzog-Plitt, *Protestantische Real-Encyclopaedie*<sup>2</sup>, II, 383.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Propheten in ihrer ursprünglichen Form*, Vienna, I, 61. Müller holds that the פרוזא and ספרות, and the formation of stanzas, date from the oldest times.

<sup>3</sup> *Literaturblatt of the Menorah*, I (1891), No. 3. Cp. on this point, Pinsker, *Einleitung in das hebräisch-babylonische Punktationssystem*, p. 133, n. 1.

For the same reason is the expression וְשֵׁנִיקָר רִאשִׁי פְסוּקִים not to be understood as referring to a division in the oldest time by means of points<sup>1</sup>.

In the absence of all historical evidence, nothing remains, as far as the oldest time is concerned, except turning to the text of the Bible itself and drawing conclusions from it. Not desiring to enter upon the frequently discussed question of Hebrew metres, stanzas, and versification<sup>2</sup>, this being beyond the scope of our investigations, I bring forward only one proof for the pre-Massoretic, or, more exactly, the pre-Talmudic origin of the division into verses<sup>3</sup>. I allude to the alphabetical portions of Holy Writ<sup>4</sup>. It is especially Psalms xxv, xxxiv, and cxix, with their symmetrical half-verses, and the third chapter of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, with its short verses, which seem to me to supply a proof that the division into verses was not a product of theological knowledge, but had its origin in the very thought and speech of the ancient Hebrews. These short sentences cannot be considered as *strophæ*; if we were to designate them as such, it would amount only to giving another name to the same thing. In the same manner I believe Psalms cxi and cxii to afford a proof for the primitive nature of the half-verses. Dichotomy is an inherent law of ancient Hebrew literature. The application of the alphabet to denote the commencement of verses bears ample evidence that the authors appreciated the separate nature of sentences; it may, therefore, be justly assumed, that the authors of the Bible had such consciousness of a division of the speech according to sentences, not only in poetry but also in prose. The melodious mode of recitation on solemn occasions, which is mentioned in the Talmud<sup>5</sup>, may be

<sup>1</sup> There were scrolls of the Torah in the Middle Ages in which a space of the size of one letter was left empty between the verses. Isaac ben Shesheth says in his *Responsæ*, No. 286 : מִה שֶׁמִּצְוָה בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרָה אֶחָד אֵינָּה מְלֵא אֵינָּה : וְכִי " מה שמצוה בספר תורה אחד איננו מלא איננו , and permits the questioner the use of the scroll.

<sup>2</sup> Besides the works of Dillmann and Müller, already cited, cf. Delitzsch, *Psalms*, 1st ed., Preface x, part II, p. 394 sqq.; 3rd ed., I, p. 17 sqq.; Budde, *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, II (1882), p. 1 sqq.; *Das Hebräische Klagelied*, XI (1891), p. 234 sqq., and the literature quoted there. Especially important for the subject of versification is S. Berger, *Histoire de la Vulgate*, Paris, 1893, p. 316 sqq. and p. 363 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> I see from Delitzsch, *Psalms*<sup>3</sup>, I, p. 20, n. 2, that Hupfeld and Riehm adopted this assumption (*Luth. Zeitschrift*, 1866, p. 300).

<sup>4</sup> Pss. ix, x, xxv, xxxiv, xxxvii, cxi, cxii, cxix, cxlv; Lam. i-iv.

<sup>5</sup> Megilla, 32 a : הָקוּרָא בְּלֵא נִימָה וְהַשְׁמָה בְּלֵא וְמָרָה : Whether the intonation in use at the present day is identical with this נִימָה remains an open question.

of very ancient origin; it certainly is pre-Talmudic. I think that no stronger proof than this for the pre-Talmudic origin of the division into verses can be adduced. Sufficient proofs are only given by the tradition.

## 2. *The Division into Verses in the Talmud and the Midrash.*

In order to be able to form a judgment on the division into verses by the authorities of Tradition, it is necessary to make a complete collection and examination of the material referring thereto; a thing which has not hitherto been done<sup>1</sup>. The attempt shall therefore be made here to reconstruct a sort of mosaic picture out of the occasional, and widely scattered utterances of the doctors of the Talmud and Midrash.

The word פסוק is of the same formation as the word כתוב; both require the noun דבר as their complement<sup>2</sup>. The root פסק does not occur in Biblical Hebrew, but in the Aramaic dialect it denotes various things<sup>3</sup>. But the way the word is applied in new-Hebrew sufficiently explains the technical meaning of the word פסוק. Only the two following meanings need be considered: (1) "to cleave asunder," (2) "to interrupt." Friedmann, in his aforementioned essay, decides for its derivation from the former meaning, and concludes from it that the separation was marked, either by a vertical stroke at the end, or by a dot at the beginning of the verse. But, as we have already explained, the term פסוק is older than any written designation of the beginning or the end of the verses. We therefore prefer the second meaning; פסק means "to interrupt the reading," "to make a pause." In the Mishna Shevi'ith we read: מלאכה שהיא פוסקת בשביעית משמטת אינה פוסקת וכו' "Labour, which rests in the seventh year," &c. In the same sense the term הפסיק is applied in innumerable passages; for instance, Mech. to 12, 6 (6 a 2): הפסיק הענין; Tosifta Megillah, 4, 10: "ממקום שפוסקין שחרית משם מתחילין במנחה וכו'"; ר' יהודה ממקום שפוסקין שבת שחרית שם מתחילין שבת הבאה קורין בשבת ומפסיקין באחד בשבת: (45 a 19): "וכו'". Single passages from the Bible are either called כתוב, after the Writing, or מקרא, after the Reading. Now it is probable that the expression to denote separate verses was taken from the Reading,

<sup>1</sup> Strack, *Prolegomena critica in Vetus Testamentum hebraicum*, pp. 78-80, 122; Harris, *JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW*, I (1884), pp. 224, 231; Friedmann, *Literaturblatt of the Menorah*, I, No. 3. They have dealt with very small fragments only of Talmudical data.

<sup>2</sup> Blau, *Zur Einleitung in die Heilige Schrift*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Elia Levita, *Methurgeman*, s. v. פסק.



(34 b 20), Jerush. Kethuboth 5, 13 (30 e 2), and Pesikta Rabbatai, ed. Friedmann, 140 a, with the difference that פסוק is read instead of מקרא. In Aboth de R. Nathan, ed. Schechter, I, c. 17 (p. 33, l. 5), we read: ר"י בן . . . כל ימי הייתי קורא מקרא זה. Besides other differences in the wording we find in the same sentence three times פסוק, and four times מקרא; the latter reading is certainly the original one, for there is no question of the length, but of the contents of the passage. Another instance is this. The contradiction and harmonization of two scripture passages is in numerous cases expressed by the following formula: כתוב אחד אומר וכו' וכתוב אחד אומר וכו' כיצד יתקיימו שני כתובים (מקראות) הללו. Thus Mechilta, 20, 7 (p. 69 a 1): כיצד יתקיימו: הללו ר' שמעון אומר קורא אני: 20, 24 (73 b 9); 23, 11 (100 b 9). Somewhat differently Mechilta, 22, 8 (92 b 4): עליו כאן וכו' וקורא אני להלן וכו' כיצד יתקיימו שני מקראות הללו. Without regarding the variation of כתוב and מקרא, on which point Mechilta, 12, 5 (4 b), is important, as after ב' מקראות the rule is cited with the expression שני כתובין; cf. Mech. 13, 6 = 20 b 4 and 12, 15 = 8 b; and also Sifre, II, 134 = Menachot, 66 a, we maintain, that in Mech. 15, 4 (38 a 7) the strange formula: כתוב אחד אומר ירה וכתוב אחד אומר רמה or ירה, cannot be called פסוק. As a matter of fact I do not think that there is any other passage in which the words כיצד יתקיימו שני פסוקים occur. In the same way צדוק הדין in Sifre, II, 307 (133 a) is a corrupted reading, for in the parallel passage in Aboda Zara, 18 a 20, we read correctly שלש מקראות של צדוק הדין. I learn from my notes that the subtle distinction between פסוק and כתוב or מקרא was disregarded after some time, so that in Echa and Koheleth Rabba the word פסוק is generally used without any notice of its original meaning being taken. This occurs so frequently that it is unnecessary to quote passages from these and other Midrashic works, such as Pesikta de Rab Kahana, &c.<sup>1</sup>

The important question has next to be considered, whether Tradition knew of a fixed division into verses, and of what nature such may have been. We can answer both questions from the tradition, and will therefore quote our sources first. The existence of a fixed division of verses is borne out by the fact that certain numbers of verses are mentioned. The previously quoted Mishna Megilla says: "Not less

<sup>1</sup> א"ל רב אחא בריה דרב אימי לרב אשי מכרי פסוקי נידרו ולקרי: Baba Bathra, 82 a. Here פסוקים are equivalent to מקראות; it is an Amora of the fifth century who speaks. Sabbath, 118 b 31, פסוקי דומרא. There are, besides, numerous other instances from the later tradition.

than *three* verses of the Torah must be read<sup>1</sup>." The Tosifta (ibid. 4, 17, 18) on the other hand says: "No *more* than *three* verses are read without interruption; if it is a Parasha of *four* or *five* verses, it is all read; if it is a Parasha of *five* verses, *three* are read and *two* are left, and the next person reads these *two* and *three* more from the next Parasha, but if this one had *four* or *five* verses, it was all read. As Haftara from the Prophets not more than *three* verses are read; if the Parasha had *four* or *five* verses, all of it is read; if it is a small Parasha, as, for instance, Isa. lii. 3, it is read by itself. At the end of a book (of the Torah), not less must be left than would suffice for seven persons<sup>2</sup>." From the Babylonian Talmud we quote the following Baraithot: Berachoth, 22 b, R. Meir teaches that one who is unclean may read only three verses from the Torah<sup>3</sup>; in the Synagogue not less than ten verses must be read<sup>4</sup>; as Haftara not less than twenty-one verses may be read<sup>5</sup>; if a slave had read in the Synagogue he was not yet declared free<sup>6</sup>; if one had betrothed a wife asserting that he was a Reader, it was enough that he had read three verses in the Synagogue<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy Rabbah, c. 7 (227 b): למה התקינו שלא יפחות משלשה פסוקים כנגד: אברהם יצחק יעקב ור"א כנגד משה ואהרן ומרים שניתנה התורה על ידיהן. This is, of course, an Agadic interpretation; such also is that given in Megilla, 21 b: כנגד כהנים ליום וישראלים or כנגד תורה נביאים וכתובים. The law that not less than three verses be read shows that it had been done before; perhaps the reading of one verse is meant. Jer. Kethuboth, 2, 10 (26 D 21): א"ר ועירא: א"ר ירמיה הענר עולה משבעה קריית וירבר עולה מנ' פסוקים.

<sup>2</sup> אין קורין בתורה יותר משלשה פסוקים בכרך אחד: אם היתה פרשה של ארבעה ושל חמשה הרי זה קורא את כולה: אם היתה פרשה של חמשה קורא ושלשה ונהיג שנים ועומר אחריו לקרות קורא אותן שנים ועוד שלשה מפרשה אחרת: אם היתה של ארבעה ושל חמשה הרי זה קורא את כולה: אין מפשירין גנבי יותר משלשה פסוקים בכרך אחד: היתה פרשה של ארבעה ושל חמשה הרי זה קורא את כולן: אם היתה פרשה קטנה כגון כה אמר ה' הנם נמכרתם קורין אותה בפני עצמה: אין משיירין באוף הספר אלא כרי שיקראו שבעה: שייך כרי שיקראו שבעה וקראו ששה ועד שבעה מחומש אחד וכו'. The apparent contradiction can be solved in this way, that a difference is made in case other persons have still to read; for then two verses of the Parasha can remain for the next person. Cf. on this rule Jer. Megillah, 4, 5 in (75 b).

<sup>3</sup> אמר ר' מאיר אין בגל קרי רשאי לקרות בתורה יותר משלשה פסוקים.

<sup>4</sup> Megilla, 21 b 22: אלא הא דרמי רב שימא אין פוחחין מעשרה פסוקים בבית הכנסת וירבר: עולה מן המנין.

<sup>5</sup> Baraitha in Megilla, 23 a: המפשיר גנבי לא יפחות מעשרים וא' פסוקים כנגד שבעה: וכו' הוי קרין עשרה פסוקים אמר לן (ר' יוחנן) אפסוקי: Ibid. 23 b 6: שקראו בתורה.

<sup>6</sup> Kethuboth, 28 b 2: שלשה פסוקים בבית הכנסת הרי זה לא יצא: לחירות.

<sup>7</sup> Kiddushin, 49 a: ה"ד על מנת שאני קרינא כיון שקרא שלשה פסוקים בג"ה הרי זו: מקודשת רבי יהודה אומר עד שיקרא ויתרגם.



These figures presuppose a fixed division into verses. So do those sentences in which single verses are mentioned. The aforementioned Mishna in Megilla, 4, 5, reads: "No more than one verse at a time is read to the interpreter, but three verses from the Prophets<sup>1</sup>." To this rule belongs also the observation of the Amoraite R. Chisda: "The interpreter may not commence before the reader has finished the verse, nor must the reader commence before the interpreter has finished his interpretation<sup>2</sup>." "One who reads the book of Esther, either letter by letter, or verse by verse," &c.; "he who wrote and read the Megilla verse by verse<sup>3</sup>." "The threats in Leviticus xxvi and Deuteronomy xxviii must not be read without break, together with the verse preceding them and the verse following them<sup>4</sup>." "The reading of a verse which is not found in the twenty-four books of the Bible is equivalent to the reading of a verse from the Apocrypha<sup>5</sup>."

As a third proof that the verses and their parts bore a fixed distinction, the decisions about the commencement and middle of verses may be cited: "Simeon ben Gamaliel says that on Sabbath the commencement of the verses may be arranged for children by lamplight<sup>6</sup>." Best known is the interpretation given to Neh. viii. 8, according to which **ויבינו במקרא** means the beginning of the verses<sup>7</sup>. The king Ahab appears to the Amoraite Levi, who had

<sup>1</sup> ולא יקרא לחורגכן יותר משסוק אחד ובגמרא שלשה.

<sup>2</sup> ואמר רבי יוירא אמר רב חסדא וכו' ואין המהרגם רשאי להתחיל בהרגום: Sota, 39 b עד שיכלה פסוק מפי הקורא ואין הקורא רשאי להתחיל בפסוק אחר עד שיכלה הרגום מפי המהרגם.

<sup>3</sup> ת"ר השמיש בה סופר אוחיה או פסוקין וקראן הקורא כמתורגמן: Megilla, 18 b המהרגם יצא—ת"ר השמיש בה הקורא פסוק אחד לא יאמר אקרא את כולה ואת"כ אקרא אורו פסוק אלא קורא מאורו פסוק ואילך—אלא כתב פסוקא פסוקא קרי ליה Cf. on the second sentence, the above cited Tosifta Megilla, 2, 2; and on the Talmudical question "of the Sh'ma, דאמר פסוקי פסוקי, Megilla, 25 a, אלא דכתב וכו' Berachot, 13 b (cf. Succah, 42 a), פסוקא קמא of the Sh'ma is mentioned.

<sup>4</sup> תנא כשהוא מחזיל (ברכות וקלות) מחזיל בפסוק שלפניהן וכשהוא Megilla, 31 b 23: מסים ממים בפסק שלאחריהן.

<sup>5</sup> כל מי שפסוקא פסוק שמיני מ"ד כפרים כאלו קורא: Numbers Rabbah, c. 14 (117 a): בשפרים החצונים. In Kohelet Rabbah, sub fin., Ben Sira and Ben Laana are named as examples. Mention may also be made of Jer. Erubin, 10, 3 (26 b 9), דאמר פסוקא פסוקא, as contrasted with דאמר פסוקא פסוקא, Jer. Sabbath, 6, 1 (8 b 18) ודאמר פסוקא פסוקא על בני מכה בשבת. והדין דאמר פסוקא פסוקא וקרי את: Cf. הפסוק הזה על בני מכה בשבת. הן עליו ספר הן עליו חפץ בשביל שיש אחר. ובגמרא שכתב א"ר הפסוק כולו: also Sabbath, 103 b 30.

<sup>6</sup> תני רשב"ג אומר התינוקות מתקנין להן ראשי פסוקיהן לאור: Jer. Sabbath, 1, 4 (3): מחווא מחקן ראשי פסוקים פסוקים פסוקים; and a little before, הדין דאמר פסוקא פסוקא.

<sup>7</sup> רבי ועירא בשם רב חננאל . . . ושום שכל אלו: Jer. Megilla, 4, 1 (74 d 50): השעמים ויבינו במקרא במקרא זה המסורת. ויש אומרים אילו ההכרנים. ויש אומרים

been wont to interpret 1 Kings xxi. 25 to his disadvantage, and says to him: "Thou only hast regard to the beginning, but not to the conclusion of the verse<sup>1</sup>." Samuel bar Nachmann says of Num. xxiii. 19, and Simon ben Lakish of Ps. cii. 18 that the beginning of the verse contradicts its latter part<sup>2</sup>. The middle of the verse is also mentioned<sup>3</sup>. Long and short verses are distinguished<sup>4</sup>, and even half-verses have a special name<sup>5</sup>. In writing most verses occupied two, three, or four lines<sup>6</sup>. From all these data it is sufficiently clear *that the texts of the Bible as possessed by the Tanaites and Amoraites had an established division of verses*. If therefore the Talmud, Kiddushin, 30 a, attributes the division into verses to the Soferim, it is only meant to express the

אילו ראשי פסוקים. In accord with this, but more accurately, Genesis Rabbah, c. 36 (149 b Wilna): וישם שכל אלו השעמים יוינו במקרא אלו ראשי הפסוקים. רב הונא בן לוליאני אומר אלו דהכרעה והראיה (?) רבנן דקסין אמרי מכאן למסירה. In Megilla, 3 a, and Nedarim, 37 b, this important passage reads thus: ואמר רב איקי בר אבין אמר רב הננאל אמר רב . . . וישם שכל אלו השעמים יוינו במקרא זה פסוק שעמים ואמר אלו המסירות פסוקים. It seems that פסוקים is the same as פסוקים, and פסוקים the same as פסוקים. Both expressions mean, respectively, complete and half-verses. The preceding note shows that ראשי פסוקים, which, according to Soferim, 3, 7, were, at a later period, also externally marked, were of importance in Palestine. I know of no passage in the Babylonian Talmud in which פסוקים, nor in the Palestinian Talmud in which פסוקים, occurred. Whether in Jer. Chagiga, 2, 4 (77 a 45) פסוקים ופסוקים is not corrupted from ראשי פסוקים I should not like to decide. The question is, מנשה מרכבה and פסוקים may be correct, although afterwards פסוק is mentioned. On פ' ראש and פ' סוף cf. Rappoport, Erech Millin, 110 b.

<sup>1</sup> Jer. Sanhedrin, 10, 2 (28 b 18): אית לך רישיה דפסוקא ולית לך סופיה; similarly Levit. Rabbah, c. 36 (96 a): רישיה דהדין פסוקא או סופיה; Berachoth, 10 a 7: דקרא ר' יוחנן, referring to Isa. liv. 1 b; *ibid.* is Ps. civ. 29 in its relation to civ. 1, called רישא דענינה, and not דקרא?

<sup>2</sup> Genesis Rabbah, c. 53 (215 b 2), and Pesikta de R. Kahana, ed. Buber, 181 a 1. The same words occur in both passages: פסוקא הוה לא ראשו סופו: פסוקא הוה לא ראשו סופו. Benjamin ben Levi speaks similarly of Ps. lxi. 34 (Gen. Rabbah, c. 71 init.), and Jose bar Chanina of Song of Solomon vi. 2 (Shir. Rabbah, s. v. = 65 a); cf. *Pesikta Rabbathi*, Friedmann, 8 b.

<sup>3</sup> Jer. Berachoth, 2, 1, sub fin.: באמצע הפרשה ואפילו באמצע הפסוק.

<sup>4</sup> Zebachim, 28 b. Lev. vii. 18 is called קרא אריכה in contrast to xix. 7. In Bamidbar Rabbah, c. 4 (27 b), Num. vii. 9 is called שהדינוקוה פסוק קרן.

<sup>5</sup> Numbers Rabbah, c. 13 (108 b), פסוקה. This chapter and chapter 14 are from a later date.

<sup>6</sup> Jer. Megilla, 71 c 10: שנים שלש שיעין: שנים שלש שיעין. There were, of course, also verses of only one line, and of more than four lines.

Having settled this point we now approach the important question whether the division of verses, known to the doctors of the Talmud, was different from the one we possess? It is only by the production of the direct and indirect testimonies contained in the Talmud and Midrash that idle speculation and gratuitous conjecture can be put a stop to. The material is much more ample than is commonly assumed, and quite sufficient to enable us to come to a decision on the question. For the purpose of greater lucidity we shall produce the proofs in several groups, and commence with those which contain evidence as about certain numbers of verses.

Numbers Rabbah c. 14 (123 b), and Midrash Tadshe, c. 11 (Epstein,

וְקוֹרֵן בַּמִּשְׁחָה בְּרֹאשִׁית בְּיוֹם הָרֶאשׁוֹן בְּרֹאשִׁית וַיְהִי רִקְעָה, בְּשֵׁנִי יְהִי רִקְעָה וַיִּקְוּ הַמַּיִם.<sup>2</sup> This can serve also as an example of the mode in which, in ancient times, biblical passages were cited.

<sup>4</sup> Jer. Megilla, 4, 2 (75 a) = Taanith, 4, 3 (68 b): והוא לית ברוך אלא חמניא.

<sup>6</sup> L. c. רש"י, Megilla, s. v. ויחזקתהו. Rashi, Megilla, s. v. ויחזקתהו, says that verse 1, 3 was divided into two, which Samuel perhaps did not mean. In Babli, Rav and Samuel dispute whether פסוק or ופסוק; in Jerushalmi, Kahana and Asi whether חזקתהו or ויחזקתהו.

*Beiträge zur jüdischen Alterthumskunde*, p. xxv), bears testimony that Gen. i. 1 to iii. 14 contained seventy verses<sup>1</sup>. That the section about Amalek, Exod. xvii. 8-16, did not have ten verses is testified by Jer. Megilla, 4, 2 (75 a), on which point compare Tosafoth, s.v. פוחתין אין in Megilla, 21 b. The Mishna Sota, 37 b, and the Talmud, 40 a 7, declare that the blessing of the priests, Num. vi. 24-26 (ברכת כהנים), contained three verses<sup>2</sup>.

Our division of verses of Numbers xxviii. 1-15 is borne out in all its parts by Megilla, 21 b<sup>3</sup>, so is our division of the Shema, Deut. vi. 4-6, Jer. Berachoth, 1, 5 (3 b 9)<sup>4</sup>. The last eight verses of the Pentateuch are, as is well known, mentioned in the old Boraitha Baba Bathra, 14 b<sup>5</sup>, and by a Tanaite of the middle of the second century in Makkot, 11 a 12<sup>6</sup>.

The Prophets and Hagiographa were not revered in the same degree as the Torah, and were not, therefore, as assiduously studied. Consequently they afford less proofs for our theory; yet they are not entirely missing even in these books.

1 Kings i. In Koheleth Rabbah, 8, 8 (44 a), R. Levi says: "Almost fifty-two times we find the expression 'the king David,' but in the narrative of his death it is only said 'David' (ii. 1), because 'there is no sovereign on the day of death.'" The strange

<sup>1</sup> Numbers Rabbah: מראש ספר בראשית עד קלל נחש שבעים פסוקים א"ר פנחס שני אויבים לא נארו עד שהשלים עליהם שבעים פסוקים הנחש והמן הרשע מבראשית עד ארור אחא מכל הבהמה שבעים פסוקים המן מאחר הדברים האלה גול המלך וגו' (Esther iii. 1): Midrash Tadshe similarly, but shorter. The Pinchas mentioned here is Pinchas ben Jair, to whom the book of the Jubilees was attributed. If Epstein's conjecture is correct, that the passages are quoted from the book of Jubilees in the name of Pinchas ben Jair, this date would be old enough; but even if the Hebrew rendering of the book of Jubilees belongs to a later period, the date would still be pretty old.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also Numbers Rabbah, c. 11 (86 a) and c. 14 (126 a).

<sup>3</sup> בעא מיניה עולא בר רב מרבא פרשת ראש חדש כיצד קורין אותה צו את בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם את קרבני לחמי דהוין המניא . . . פשו להו שבעה דביום השבת הוין חרי ובראשי חדשיכם הוין חמשה וכו'.

<sup>4</sup> א"ר מני וכו' ג' פסוקין הראשונים צריכין כונה מן גו דאינון ציביר מיכון. Vide 2, 1 (4 a, at the bottom) בר קפרא; Sabbath, 1, 1 (3 a 9, at the bottom); 2, 1 (4 b 1) and Babli Berachoth, 61 b = Jer. Berachoth, 9, 5 (14 b 15, at the bottom) = Jer. Sota, 5, 7 (20 c) ליעקבא, Deut. vi. 5. These passages leave no doubt that שמע ישראל was divided in the same manner as we have it.

<sup>5</sup> יהושע כתב ספרו ושמונה פסוקים שבתורה. Vide ibid. 15 a; Menachoth, 30 a: אמר רב גידל אמר רב שמנה פסוקים שבתורה יהי קורא אותן רבי יוסי בי רבי בון חומנתי פסוקיא אחרייא דמשנה הורה מענין ברכה לפניה ולאחריה.

<sup>6</sup> פליגי בה ר' יהודה ור' נחמיה ח"א שמנה פסוקים וח"א עי מקלם.

expression, "almost fifty-two times," can only be understood thus, that Levi counted in the first chapter of 1 Kings fifty-two verses, and means to say that the words "the king David" occurs in almost every verse, but immediately after, when David's death is mentioned, he is called "David" only<sup>1</sup>.

Leviticus Rabbah, c. 6 (20 b 1) ascribes the authorship of the two verses, Isa. viii. 19, 20, to Beeri, the father of Hosheah, and says that they were embodied in the prophecy of Isaiah because they afforded too little material for a separate book<sup>2</sup>. Of the prophets, three verses were read consecutively to the interpreter, but if such three verses constituted three separate sections, in that case they were read separately. The Talmud, Megilla, 24 a, says in explanation of these words of the Mishna, "for instance, Isa. lii. 3-5," which verses we also have as two Parashas<sup>3</sup>.

Psalms xix. 8-10 are called three verses in Numbers Rabbah, c. 13 (108 b)<sup>4</sup>; that the people responded Ps. ciii. 20-22 to the blessing of the priests is mentioned in Jer. Berachoth, 1, 1 (2 c 25), and Babl. Sota, 39 b, and that text is called expressly three verses in Numbers Rabbah, c. 11 (86 a, at the bottom), in the name of Amoraites<sup>5</sup>. Of less importance is the evidence of the tradition that Threni i. 1-5 formed five verses<sup>6</sup>, and that the third chapter of the same book had a threefold alphabet of verses<sup>7</sup>. Numbers Rabbah, c. 14 (114 b,

<sup>1</sup> The Agadah reads: א"ר לוי קרוב לחמשים ונתיב המלך ודור כיון (1 Kings ii. 1). שנתיב למות כתיב ויקרבו ימי דוד למות משום ואין שלשון ביום המות. Verbal communication by Prof. Bacher. In our text the chapter has fifty-three verses.

<sup>2</sup> א"ר סימון בארי לא נתנבא אלא שני פסוקים ולא היה בהם כרי ספר ונתפלו בישיעה. In the parallel passage, c. 15 (40 b, at the bottom), we read דברים instead of פסוקים.

<sup>3</sup> ולא יקרא למחורגמן יותר מפסוק אחד ונתנבא שלשה היו שלשהן שלש פרשיות קורין. The Talmud mentions as an instance of this Isa. lii. 3-5. Baer, in his edition of Isaiah, restores also the third Parasha, but only on the ground of our passage from the Talmud, which is inadmissible, as Baer wanted to give the Massoretic text.

<sup>4</sup> כנגד ג' פסוקים של תורה (i. e. Bible) שבהם ו' סורי משנה.

<sup>5</sup> פליגי בה רב מאיר ורב וביר דר אמר פסוק כנגד פסוק ודר אמר בכל פסוק אמר לכל ג' הפסוקים.

<sup>6</sup> Jer. Moed Katon, 3, 7 (83 b 44), says, in reference to Jer. xxxvi. 23: מהוה שלש ולמות וארבעה הלא ארבע פסוקין כיון שהגיע לפסוק החמישי כי ה' הנה. Parallel passages: Genesis Rabbah, c. 42 (169 a); Leviticus Rabbah, c. 11 (32 a), and others. The identification of ולמות and פסוקים is interesting; it is possible.

<sup>7</sup> Echa Rabbah, proemium No. 28 (15 a): שהוא מן תלמי תלמי פסוקא: בגלגל ביתא.

at the bottom), says that 2 Chron. vi. 18-41 consisted of twenty-four verses<sup>1</sup>. That Esther iii-vii numbered seventy verses, has already been mentioned above, when we spoke on Genesis. According to S adyah, *Emunoth Weduoth*, c. 7 (ed. Cracow, p. 147), Daniel xi. 2-xii. 3 had forty-seven verses; and details are given as to groups of these verses, entirely in accord with our division of verses.

The allegations as to the number of verses of whole books can also be taken advantage of in proof of the division of verses. It is known that the principal passage is in Kiddushin, 30a, where a statement is made as to the number of verses of the Pentateuch, the Psalms, and the Chronicles. On account of the importance of the subject we shall devote a special chapter to the number of verses of the Pentateuch, and in connexion therewith, to those of the Psalms and the Chronicles; and shall, therefore, mention here only Samuel bar Nachman's statement as to the number of verses of the Proverbs. He says, in Shir Rabbah, i, 1 (5 b), in agreement with our Massorah, that he had not found in the whole book of Proverbs more than nine hundred and fifteen verses<sup>2</sup>. Midrash Tadshe, c. 20 (p. xxxviii), says of Threni that it consisted of one hundred and fifty-four verses<sup>3</sup>, which agrees with our number. This statement would, of course, be of importance for ancient times, only if we knew that it emanated from an ancient source.

<sup>1</sup> כ"ד רננה. This is a later interpretation, after כ"ד פסוקים, as older sources interpret it.

<sup>2</sup> אמר ר' שמואל בר נחמני חורני על כל ספר משלי ולא מצינו שכתב בו אלא חשע מאות וט"ז פסוקים ואת אומר ג' אלפים משל (?) אלא שאין לך כל פסוק ופסוק שאין בו פסוקים. Pesikta, 34 b; Pesikta Rabbathi, 60a; Koheleth Rabbah, 7, 23; Tanchuma, 14; Numbers Rabbah, c. 19 (156 b): אלא קרוב לשמונה מאות פסוקים. Although this latter reading had already been possessed by Kimchi (Commentary to 1 Kings v. 12), I believe, nevertheless, that only Shir Rabbah has preserved Samuel bar Nachman's statement in its authentic form. It was easy for חתקמ' (915) to be turned into חת קר' = חת קרוב לשמונה מאות. Strack, *Prolegomena*, p. 12, assumes the figure 915 to be a correction of the copyist, in order to obtain agreement with the Massorah. We do not share this opinion, because there can be no question of another system of division into verses; and it is, therefore, impossible to cause 115 verses to disappear. The term פסוקים will have to be taken to mean the single sentences in the middle of the verse, equal to the פסוקים in the Babylonian Talmud. He therefore says only that in each verse two or three פסוקים were contained, although  $915 \times 3$  still does not give 3,000. If he had meant what Bacher assumed in *Agada der Paläst. Amoräer*, I, 501, that each verse had several meanings, this limitation would be out of place. Friedmann, n. 55, ad loc., thinks that Samuel bar Nachman had merely counted the משלים, and found 800 (?).

<sup>3</sup> ר' (?) פשוטות הן בשאר דוה יש בהן קנ"ד פסוקים.

We shall now adduce passages from the Talmuds and Midrashim demonstrating to certainty that single verses commenced and terminated with the authorities of the tradition in the same way as in our Massorah. For the sake of shortness we shall content ourselves, in most cases, with indicating the sources, without communicating the matter itself. In by far the greater portion it is quite impossible to have any doubt as to their demonstrative value. In order to facilitate the survey as much as possible, we have, as far as our exposition allowed it, retained the order of the Biblical passages. We do not claim to have been exhaustive; on the contrary, we are convinced that a careful study would be rewarded by a rich gleanings. We omit several allegations already given in reference to other points.

Our division of verses is testified: for GENESIS ii. 16 in Pesikta, 100b<sup>1</sup>; for iv. 23, 1 Kings i. 33, Esther viii. 8 in Genesis Rabbah, c. 51 (209a); for xiii. 7 in Pesikta Rabbathi, 9b<sup>2</sup>; for xix. 24, 25 in Pesikta, 170a<sup>3</sup>. For EXODUS ii. 4 in Sota, 11 a 17<sup>4</sup>; the full and half verses of chap. xv. in Mechilta, 15, 1, Tosifta Sota, 6, 23 (303<sup>16</sup>), Mishna Sota, 5, 6, Jer. Sota, 20 c 9, Babli Sota, 30 b<sup>5</sup>. LEVITICUS: we have already spoken of the "long verse," vii. 18, in contrast to xix. 7 (Zebachim, 28 b 14). Pesikta R. interprets the whole verse, Lev. xxiii. 24, when it says **בַּפְסוֹק בּוֹ** "in the same verse;" xxiii. 27, 32; xvi. 29, 31, Num. xxix. 7, are entirely quoted in

<sup>1</sup> ר' יוסי בר סימן פתר . . . וכולם בפסוק אחד.

<sup>2</sup> א"ר יהודה בר סימן קרא סופו של פסוק והכנינו והצרנו או יושב בארץ.

<sup>3</sup> Two commencements of verses, with omission of the rest, in one quotation.

<sup>4</sup> א"ר יצחק פסוק זה כולו על שם שבינה נאמר, followed by an interpretation of the *whole* verse.

<sup>5</sup> An exposition of the different readings, and an explanation of the passage, would occupy too much space, and we must therefore leave the reader to do it for himself. For our purpose the following words of the Mechilta are already sufficient: משה היה פותח ואומר אשריה לה' כי גאה ברביו ה' וישראל ענין אחריו וגומרין עמו' משה היה פותח ואומר אשריה לה' כי גאה וישראל אמר סוס ורכבו רמה בים' משה היה אומר ענין ומרת יה וישראל ענין אחריו ויהי לי לשינה' משה היה פותח יי' איש מלחמה וישראל ענין אחריו וגומרין עמו יי' איש מלחמה. Thus the passage reads without Friedmann's correction. It seems that Moses intoned the first half-verse, whereupon Israel responded with the second half, so that they concluded the verse at once together with Moses. I would, therefore, strike out the second איש מלחמה. The short ver. 3 is particularly conclusive. I would give it as a conjecture that one of the controversies of the disputing Tanaites was whether each sentence (= ענין) formed a separate verse. The שירה הים is, as is known, written, according to the Massorah, in separate verses.

Joma, 76a. NUMBERS viii. 19 is testified in Leviticus Rabbah<sup>1</sup>, c. 2 (8 a 8); xxiii. 19 in Genesis Rabbah, c. 53 (215 b 2); xxiv. 9 in Talmud Berachoth, 12 b (in the middle). DEUTERONOMY viii. 8 is testified in Berachoth, 41 a, and parallel passages; xvi. 14 in Pesikta, 100a. The first words of xxxii. 1, 7, 13, 19, 27, 39, are abbreviated and composed into a mnemonic in Rosh Hashanah, 31 a 16<sup>2</sup>; xxxiii. 18 is testified in Numbers Rabbah, c. 13 (109 a).

For the division into verses of the second portion of Holy Writ the following passages are of importance: 1 Sam. xxv. 32 is testified in Jer. Sanhedrin, 2, 3, at the end (20 b); 1 Sam. i. 11 in Pesikta Rabbathi, 18 a<sup>3</sup>; i. 16, 18 in Sanhedrin, 93 a, at the bottom<sup>4</sup>; 2 Sam. xii. 3 in Megilla, 13 a 29, where it is quoted in full; 1 Kings xxi. 25 in Jer. Sanhedrin, 10, 2 (28 b 18); Isa. iv. 6 in Sukka, 6 b, at the bottom (quoted in full); lxxv. 24 in Exodus Rabbah, c. 21 (79 b)<sup>5</sup>; Jer. ii. 2 in Sanhedrin, 110 b 18 (quoted in full by Jochanan); xv. 2 in Baba Bathra, 8 b 6; Ezek. viii. 16 (a long verse), x. 2, 7, 9, 11, 1 Kings ii. 26 (long verse) are fully quoted, neither less nor more, Joma, 77 a, at the top.

Of the Hagiographa, the Psalms are most frequently quoted, and for the division of their verses the most proofs can be adduced; which is of special importance for the double mode of division into verses, of which we shall speak later on. For the examples to be cited prove that the ordinary division into verses was the one we have. We have made the following notes. The well-known Baraitha in Sukka, 55 a, cites in full Ps. xxix. 1, l. 16, xciv. 16, xciv. 8, lxxxv. 7, lxxxii. 5 b. The last verse seems to have commenced with יְמוּכֹוֹ. The single verses of this Psalm have, indeed, two parts each, with the exception of ours. Ps. xxi. 9 is testified in Esther Rabbah, 1, 1 (6 a); xxxi. 6, Berachoth, 5 a, at the top; xxxix. 2, Gittin, 7 a 11<sup>6</sup>; xlv. 8 in Pesikta

<sup>1</sup> The same in Pesikta d. R. Kahana, 17 a: וְיָרָא כְּמָה דִּיבָב. א"ר יוֹרָן בּוֹא וְרָאָה כְּמָה דִּיבָב. The verse has thirty words, and there is no verse of similar length near it.

<sup>2</sup> בְּמוֹסָפֵי וְשִׁבְתָּה מָה הָיוּ אוֹמְרִים (?) אָמַר רַב הֵנָּה אָמַר רַב הוּיָו ל"ך [ה=הַאוֹיֵנוּ]. The first four sections consist, according to Rashi, of six verses each, the last two of eight verses each, which does not answer; for then there would be only forty verses, whilst the האוינו has forty-three verses. Even if Rashi meant that the last three sections had eight verses each, there still remained a superfluous verse, namely, between 27 and 39.

<sup>3</sup> א"ר יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב כָּל הַפֶּסֶק הוּא.

<sup>4</sup> א"ר שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָנִי שְׁלֹשָׁה פָּסָקִים כְּרוּב בַּפֶּסֶק וְהָאֶמְתָּן אֶמְתָּן אֶמְתָּן כְּנֻגֵּי שֵׁשׁ מִצְוֹת וכו'.

<sup>5</sup> שְׁנֵי פָּעָמִים בַּפֶּסֶק הוּא אָמַר אֲנִי וְאֲנִי.

<sup>6</sup> שִׁרְשֵׁשׁ וְכַתֵּב לֵיהּ (ר"א לְמַר עֲקֵבָא).



Rabbathi, 150 a<sup>1</sup>; xlv. 8 (and 12), Jer. Berachoth, 5, 1 (8 d 47); l. 7, Sanhedrin, 110 b 11; lxix. 34 in Genesis Rabbah, c. 71, at the commencement (277 a)<sup>2</sup>; civ. 31 in Chullin, 60 a, at the bottom; civ. 35 and Isa. liv. 1 in Berachoth, 10 a 7.

The other books of the Hagiographa are also represented by some verses: Prov. xiv. 34 in Pesikta d. R. Kahana, 13 b; xxx. 4 in Pesikta Rabbathi, 15 a; Job xxxvi. 3 in Leviticus Rabbah, c. 14 (38 b 2, at the bottom); Koheleth ii. 12 in Exodus Rabbah, c. 2, at the commencement (33 b); Esther i. 14 in Megilla, 12 b 30<sup>3</sup>; Dan. iv. 34 in Leviticus Rabbah, c. 13 (38 a 3); 2 Chron. vii. 3 in Shebuoth, 16 b; xv. 3 in Leviticus Rabbah, c. 19 (52 a 5, at the bottom).

There is yet another formula which furnishes an unmistakable proof for the division of verses, and which occurs often enough. We allude to the favourite sentence that "three things are contained in one verse<sup>4</sup>." If the ancients had had a division of verses different from ours, there should be cases of passages of scripture having now two verses of which it was said that "all three things occurred in one verse." But no such case occurs in the passages noted by me, and which follow here. That there is no question here of the opinions of single individuals is proved by the circumstance that many a statement in reference to this occurs several times, in the most different sources, and in the name of many authorities, as will be clearly seen from our list: Gen. iii. 6 in Genesis Rabbah, c. 19 (84 b), Jose ben Zimra=Koheleth Rabbah, 5, 10 (30 b); Exod. xv. 13 in Numbers Rabbah, c. 12 (97 a), which same interpretation is applied to another biblical passage in Jer. Megilla, 3, 7 (74 b 39); Deut. xiv. 7<sup>5</sup> in Leviticus Rabbah, c. 13 (37 b); xxxiii. 23 in Jer. Berachoth, 7, 6 (11 d, at the top); Isa. li. 16 in Jer. Taanith, 4, 2 (68 a, at the bottom, bis)<sup>6</sup>=Jer. Megilla, 3, 7 (79 b 39); Zech. x. 1 in Jer. Taanith, 3, 2 (66 c 18, 28) in the name of Eleazar (ר' לעזר)=Leviticus Rabbah,

<sup>1</sup> Introduced by the words שהפסוק הזה, and fully indicated. When we make no remarks, the reader should carefully consider the cited passage before doubting its demonstrative value.

<sup>2</sup> לא ראשו של פסוק הזה סופו ולא סופו ראשו, already quoted before, as is also the following passage. But the passages, already adduced before in proof of the designation of the portions of the verses, are not all repeated.

<sup>3</sup> אמר ר' לוי כל פסוק זה על שם קרבנות נאמר.

<sup>4</sup> ושלשית בפסוק אחד.

<sup>5</sup> Not Lev. c. 11, where these three significant words are scattered over vers. 4, 5, 6. The original place of the Agadah was in Deuteronomy, whence it was taken over. We cannot, therefore, agree with Harris, *J. Q. R.* I, 140. It seems that Harris allowed himself to be carried away by Strack, *Prolegomena*, p. 80.

<sup>6</sup> The whole verse is interpreted.

c. 35 (103 b); Koheleth xii. 1 in Jer. Sota, 2, 2 (18 a) in the name of Levi; 2 Chron. vii. 14 in Jer. Taanith, 2, 1 (65 b 3), Eleazar<sup>1</sup>.

On recapitulating our investigations thus far, we find that an innumerable amount of data testify to the high—we may safely say the pre-Talmudic—antiquity of *our* division of verses<sup>2</sup>. We will now do what hitherto has been exclusively done, namely, to look at the reverse of the medal, and look for those statements which speak against our division of verses. In order to prevent misunderstandings, we observe at the very beginning that here only the information given by the tradition and the oldest Jewish commentators shall be taken notice of, as these can also be regarded as the Massoretes of their age. On the other hand, the views of the modern commentators who differ from the Massorah shall not be taken into account, because the subject of inquiry is, above all, to establish the historical conditions of the question, but not to investigate the correctness of the views of the Massoretes. We have no reason to believe in the infallibility of the Massoretes; for, with all our admiration for their truly grand achievements, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that they have made now and then serious mistakes<sup>3</sup>. Historical importance would attach to the conceptions of the ancient versions when contradicting those of the Massorah, especially to those of the LXX and the Peshita; there is, however, as yet a want of more modern special inquiries<sup>4</sup>.

Only a small number of verses divided in a different way from that of the Massorah can be pointed out; we shall adduce them in as far as we know them.

<sup>1</sup> The Agadah occurs also: Jer. Sanh. 10, 2 (28 c 9); Koheleth Rabbah, 5, 6 (28 b); Pesikta Rabbathi, 200 a, 200 b 16, ר"ן, as if it were a Baraita; Genesis Rabbah, c. 44 (180 b).

<sup>2</sup> Vide Frankel, *Vorstudien zu der Septuaginta*, p. 217, holds that the "present division of verses" is younger than the Talmudical period. We return to that question in the course of our essay.

<sup>3</sup> Vide my *Massoretische Untersuchungen*, and my *Zur Einleitung in die Heilige Schrift*, pp. 100–120.

<sup>4</sup> Important observations on the stichometry of the Old and New Testaments have been made by Graux, Martin, Sanday, Zahn, Harris, Berger, and E. Klostermann. But detailed investigations would be required for our purpose. Such have not been made, to our knowledge, to such an extent as to enable the question as to the relations of the division of verses of the LXX, the Peshita, and other versions to be discussed. We shall, as soon as possible, devote a special inquiry to this subject. Azaria de Rossi, *Meor Enayim*, II, c. 8, at the commencement, has already drawn attention to the different division of verses between the LXX and the Massorah.

Rashi to Gen. xix. 18 connects אֲדָנִי to the following verse, at which Norzi, ad loc., expresses his surprise. Ib. xxxv. 22, we have a פִּסְקָא בִּאֲמֻצֵּעַ פִּסּוֹק, whilst Pinsker, *Einleitung in das babylonische Punktationssystem*, p. 48, states that, in an old code of the Bible, this passage formed two verses, which Geiger had already assumed (*Urschrift*, 373). The Massoretes differ about it, as Norzi observes ad loc. From Megilla, 25 b 22, it might be inferred that this text had been taken as *one* verse; for we read there that when, during the reading at the synagogue, the passage וַיְהִי בִשְׁכַן יִשְׂרָאֵל was read, Chanina ben Gamliel called out to the Meturgeman, "Translate only the last<sup>1</sup>." If the verse had terminated with the words וַיִּשְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, the Meturgeman, to whom it was not allowed to read more than a verse at a time, would have had nothing to translate. At any rate, the possibility that in reference to this verse Massorah and tradition were in conflict is not excluded. Similarly, the *possibility* of a contradiction must be admitted in reference to Gen. xlix. 7. It is known that this verse belongs to one of the five passages, the division of which is doubtful, so that אֲרִיר of the following verse is brought in connexion with the preceding one<sup>2</sup>. It is true the Massorah had to decide for one of the two modes of division. All scholars who dealt with the division of verses, take their stand on the Talmudical passage in Kiddushin, 30 a (=Nedarim, 38 a), according to which, in Palestine, Exod. xix. 9 was divided into three verses. We should have, therefore, historical evidence for the discrepancy between the Babylonian and the Palestinian division of verses. We shall soon have occasion to speak about this.

Numbers xii. 2, 3 was read as one by Nathan, Sifre I, 100<sup>3</sup>. This is not, however, to our mind, a proof for any difference in the division of verses from ours, for such license was admissible in interpreta-

<sup>1</sup> אל תרנגם אלא אחרון.

<sup>2</sup> Mechilta, 17, 9 (54 a, at the top); Jer. Aboda Zara, 2, 8 (41 c, at the bottom); Babl. Joma, 52 a; Genesis Rabbah, c. 80 (303 b), and elsewhere: חמשה דברים יש בחורה שאין להם הכרח. The other examples and the divergence in the sources do not concern us here. I must confess I cannot understand how a Tanna could have had any doubt whether Gen. iv. 7, שָׂמָח וְאָם לֹא תִשָּׂר, was to be read. The matter is very obscure. Cf. also רמב. No. 17. On the הכרעה in the middle of a verse, vide Minchat Shai to Gen. xxxiv. 7, Exod. xxiv. 5, xxv. 34, Deut. xxxi. 16. In this connexion the saying of Raba's becomes of interest: מִפְּסָקָא קָרָא: א"ל רבא סבינא הדינא מִפְּסָקָא קָרָא (Menachoth, 74 a; Baba Bathra, 111 b; Arachin, 26 a). Geiger, *Urschrift*, p. 143, tries to explain why they wanted to connect אֲרִיר with the preceding verse.

<sup>3</sup> ר' נתן אומר . . . שנאמר וישמע ה' והאיש משה.

tions<sup>1</sup>. Deut. iv. 30, 31 is introduced in Pesikta, ed. Buber, 162 b 2, with the words הפסוק הזה. It is, however, possible that originally only the first verse was cited here, and that afterwards the second verse was added to it; or also, that הפסוק is equivalent to הכתוב, since the difference between these two expressions was no longer felt in the idiom of the later Midrashim, as we noted above<sup>2</sup>. It is not impossible that Sifre took Deut. xviii. 12, 13 to be one verse, as both verses are treated in one Piska; it is true, in a short one (II, 173)<sup>3</sup>. The majuscule Tav in תמים would, in that case, have to be considered as a polemical sign against the connexion of the two verses. Deut. xxv. 2 terminates, according to the Massorah, with במספר, and ver. 3 commences with ארבעים. According to the Mishna, Makkoth, 22 a, as also Sifre, II, 286<sup>4</sup>, these two words belong together. The Septuagint concurs *with this*, for there ver. 3 commences καὶ ἀριθμῶ τεσσαράκοντα<sup>5</sup>. Josh. xiii. 3 concludes with והערים. This is also assumed in the Talmud, Chullin, 60 b, where the question is asked and answered, why five Philistine princes are mentioned and six enumerated. But, at the same time, it is recorded that Rab and a Baraitha are of a different opinion, and maintain that the ערים came from Teman<sup>6</sup>, to which Tosafoth correctly observes that, according to this conception, והערים must be drawn to the following verse. Ps. lxxxii. 5 b was perhaps the commencement of a new verse; this has already been conjectured before, after Sukka, 55 a. In the Mishna, Aboda Zara, 2, 8, there is a controversy between Joshua and

<sup>1</sup> In the Halachic Midrashim we found several, but did not note them down. Cf. Strack, l. c., pp. 78 and 155.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. Sanhedrin, 10, 2 (28 c), also has הפסוק הזה, and likewise cites both verses required by the context. The possibility of a divergence between Massorah and tradition may therefore be admitted.

<sup>3</sup> There are, of course, many Piskas that treat on several verses. But in this passage a connexion of the two verses meets with no difficulty, so that the possibility may be admitted.

<sup>4</sup> יכול ארבעים שלמיות ה"ל במספר ארבעים מנין סמוך ל' מ' ר' יהודה אומר ארבעים שלמים. The controversy is perhaps based on a discrepancy in the division of the verses. 23 a 19, Rabba Kahana cites במספר.

<sup>5</sup> This was already pointed out by Azaria de Rossi, *Meor Enayim*, II, c. 8, at the commencement; but it escaped him that in this case the Tradition with the LXX gave evidence against the Massorah.

<sup>6</sup> ופליגא ררב דאמר רב ערים מהימן באר' הניא נמי הכי ערים מהימן באר' וכו'. The Vulgate accords with the Talmudic division, which might be referred back to Jerome (Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift*, X, 277). But the Talmudic passage shows also that our division was not only known, but also generally adopted; otherwise the question, "five are named and six enumerated," could not have been raised at all.

Ishmael about Song of Solomon, i. 2, which has been much discussed. A. Perls tried to prove<sup>1</sup> with arguments, some of which are plausible enough, that the difference of opinion turned on the question, whether מִיִּין has to be drawn to the next verse; and that Joshua negated it by citing the Song of Solomon iv. 10, where מִיִּין could not be combined with וְיִירָה. Accordingly, in the Mishna, וְיִירָה שְׁמַנִּיךְ would have to be read instead of לְיִירָה שְׁמַנִּיךְ, and טוֹבִים to be struck out, as being a later addition. In post-Talmudical time, S<sup>e</sup>adyah has, in ten passages, adopted a termination of the verses different from the traditional<sup>2</sup>. The Orientals and Occidentals differ about Deut. xvi. 3; according to the former כִּי בַחֲפוּזִין פָּסוּק, according to the latter מִצְעוֹת פָּסוּק<sup>3</sup>. They also differ about Isa. xx. 2, which the Orientals divide into two verses<sup>4</sup>. Ps. xli. 6 terminates, according to the St. Petersburg Codex, as also the Peshita, with the first word of ver. 7<sup>5</sup>.

Only ten of the passages discussed here belong to the Talmud and Midrash, and I have my doubts about them, whether they really contradict the Massorah; since only Deut. iv. 30, 31 and Ps. lxxxii. 5 b have been handed down by the tradition without controversy, and it is not at all clear that they are contradictory. Exod. xix. 9, which is considered by the scholars to clinch the question as to the divergence in the division of verses, proves at the same time that this passage formed one verse in Babylonia; consequently, that our Massorah is based upon the Babylonian traditions. The Massorah

<sup>1</sup> In the Hungarian Magazine, *Magyar Zsidó Szemle*, XI, 158 sqq. One of his chief arguments is taken from Jer. Aboda Zara, 2, 8 (41 c, at the bottom): אִם יִהְיֶינָה גִּבּוֹרִים הִיא מְבֻקֶּשֶׁת הִיא לֹא לְהִשָּׂא בַחֲמֵשׁ הַשְּׂאִיָּה שְׁבוּרָה. This interpretation is disputed by A. Sidon, l. c., p. 266 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. on this point, Bacher, *Abraham Ibn Ezra als Grammatiker*, pp. 38, 39, where also the opinions of Jehuda Halevi (*Kusari*, III, 21), Ibn Ezra, and Efodi (*Maasse Efod*, c. 7, p. 41) on the distribution of verses are given. It is held to be the work of either Ezra or the Ecclesia Magna. Samuel ben Meir, in accordance with Shocher Tob (ed. Rosin, p. 46), connects also וְהָמָנָה, Gen. xxxvi. 12, with the preceding verse. In our copies of Shocher Tob, the passage is not found (vide Rosin, ad loc., n. 10), Jad Maleachi, n. 283.

<sup>3</sup> Vide Baer, *Liber Genesis* (Lipsiae, 1869), p. 81, n. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Baer, *Liber Jesaiae* (Lipsiae, 1872); Pinsker, *Einleitung in das babylonisch-hebräische Punktationssystem* (Vienna, 1863), p. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Pinsker, l. c., p. 133, corrects at the same time פָּנִי after xlii. 12 and xliii. 5, into קָנִי. Pinsker expresses himself there on the division of verses and accentuation in general; he gives several conjectures about Biblical passages in contradiction to the Massorah, and quotes such also from older and newer works. We also refer to Buhl, *Kanon und Text des A. T.*, pp. 233 sqq. and 241; Dillmann, *Hieob*<sup>4</sup>, XXIV, on xi. 6 and xvi. 4.

has thus made a choice out of two traditional opinions, but there is no question of a conflict with tradition. Besides, there seems also to have been a Massorah, which followed the Palestinianians, which we shall try to show in the chapter on the number of verses of the Pentateuch. Too far-reaching conclusions have been drawn from the passage in Kiddushin, 30a. It was overlooked that there the question is that of fixing the exact half of the number of verses of the Pentateuch, namely, whether Lev. xiii. 33 belongs to the first or the second half. A decision on this point can be arrived at by counting, only when there is no doubt about any one verse of the whole Pentateuch in reference to number. It can, therefore, be understood why R. Joseph in a *dispute about words* declines a proposal to count the verses of the Pentateuch by referring to the statement of an Amoraite as to the division of Exod. xix. 9. But this does not show yet that in Babylonia the division of verses was carried on in an arbitrary manner, or that there had been greater differences of opinion about the same. Just the contrary. Since R. Joseph refers to a Palestinian and not to a Babylonian controversy, we may conclude with confidence that in Babylon there was no difference of opinion on the point. R. Joseph, in saying, "We are not conversant with the division of verses," means, as may be gathered from the context, that there may be some verse or other which was divided in Palestine into two verses, as the example he refers to shows; but he never thought of a different system of dividing the verses, or even of one that was divergent in a number of instances. On the other hand, in asking the question whether the Massoretic and Talmudic mode of dividing the verses were identical, we do not mean to say that every single verse of the twenty-three thousand must concur. The identity of both modes of dividing the verses is established even if—and this is not the case—in some ten or twenty of the five thousand eight hundred and forty-five verses of the Pentateuch an essential discrepancy between Talmud and Massorah could be shown. Even between Madinchaë and Maarbaë differences are shown to exist on this point, and yet nobody will think of maintaining that these schools had two different modes of dividing the verses.

We were not able to oppose anything to the numerous decisive proofs for the concurrence of Talmud and Massorah, even after a diligent investigation of the sources and the literature, except a few uncertain passages. The proofs in favour of the identity emanate both from Palestinian and Babylonian sources, and belong to various periods; and this *testifies to the same division of verses in the divers lands during the course of centuries*. This disposes also of Rappoport's conjecture (*Halichoth Kedem*, Amsterdam, 1846, pp. 10 and 17) that in Palestine, where the whole Pentateuch was read

in three years, most verses were divided into two or three<sup>1</sup>. It is also groundless, when Friedmann, in the final note to *Sifre Numeri* and the *Litteraturblatt* of the *Menora*, I, No. 3, speaks of an uncertainty in reference to the division of verses having crept in at some period, so that we no longer know which verses were formerly divided. We have traced our division of verses from the most ancient time up to the conclusion of the tradition, and shall find the same again in the various statements of the Massorah. The far-reaching inference, which Grätz (*Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums*, XX, 52) draws from a Gaonic expression is also unjustified, and must be rejected<sup>2</sup>. If we look without prejudice upon the age of the division of verses, we must consider the differences that have arisen in the course of centuries in various countries as rather too few than too numerous, and, in opposition to most scholars, take them as exceptions to the rule, tending to confirm the high age of the division we possess.

### 3. *The Division of Verses of the Massorah.*

In the preceding investigations it was presumed that the division of verses of the Massorah was known, and that, with very few exceptions, it was identical with that of our editions of the Bible. This identity is, in the first instance, based upon the tradition; for our editions flowed from manuscripts in which the division of verses was marked. It is further based on the concurrence of the numbers of the verses of separate sections (Pentateuch), and of the sums of the verses of the separate books and of the three parts. That also the separate verses in respect to their magnitude, i.e. the division of verses, in a narrower sense, are the same in our copies as those which the Massorah hands down and demands, follows from the diversified statements about the "Pesukim," which can be verified by the "Pesukim" of our copies. It is for the purpose of establishing

<sup>1</sup> Baer also, *Orient*, XII (1851), p. 263, rejects Rappoport's opinion without attempting the proof given by us as to the verses mentioned by the tradition. Cf. also Luzzatto's *Letters*, p. 345 seq.

<sup>2</sup> ואפילו במקראות . . . יש שני בהם בין בלל לארץ ישראל בחסות ויהרות ובפחוחות וחסומות ובפסקי השמים ובחיתוך הסוקים. From this it follows that in only a few passages there existed a difference between Madinchaß and Maarbaß; but there is no question of different systems or of numerous differences. Pinsker, *Punktationssystem*, p. 133 seq., also speaks of the division of verses as of something changeable. Cf. also at the end of the fifth chapter the confutation of Grätz's conjecture about the division and the middle of the verses of the Pentateuch.

this assertion, and, at the same time, of illustrating what importance the Massoretes attached to the division and limitation of verses, and what amount of labour they consequently bestowed on them, that we will produce here a few characteristic data from the Massoretic material extant. For this object we shall make use of the *Massora marginalis* and *finalis*, such as Frensdorff's Massoretic works (*Ochlah We-Ochlah*, Hanover, 1864, and *Massoretisches Wörterbuch*, Hanover and Leipzig, 1876), and Ginsburg's *The Massorah* (3 parts). In the latter books the reader can find the further explanations of the data we produce, and, of course, a great number of other data on this point<sup>1</sup>.

We commence with the proofs for whole verses. There are three verses (Gen. ii. 5, Num. xxvi. 8, Josh. xi. 14) which number eighty letters (*Ochla*, No. 316, cf. *M. W. B.*, p. 377 b); three verses commence and terminate with ׀ (*Massora Exodus*, 29, 30; *M. W. B.*, p. 378 b; Ginsburg, ׀, No. 17). Eleven other verses begin and terminate with ׀ (Ginsburg, II, ׀, No. 13 = Lev. xiii. 9; Num. xxxii. 32, &c.). There are ten verses each word of which contains a ׀ (*Massora*, Num. xxvi. 24; *Mf.*, ׀, 8; Ginsburg, ׀, 18); the whole alphabet (Ginsburg, ׀, 277; *M. W. B.*, p. 381 b; for instance, Zeph. iii. 8: cf. *Minchat Shai*; Ezek. xxxviii. 12, &c.). Five verses have forty words each: Jer. xxxviii. 4, Dan. iii. 15, v. 23, Esther iii. 12 (*Massoret. Wörterbuch*, 380 and 381, No. 1). The fifth verse was unknown to Frensdorff; it is, as Ginsburg, ׀, 442, correctly states, Dan. vi. 13. Fourteen verses of the Pentateuch contain three words each (*Massora Exodus*, 28, 13, &c.; *Mf.* 7, 1; *M. W. B.*, p. 381, No. 4; Ginsburg, ׀, 439). Four verses have each seven words consisting of four letters (*Mp.*, Psalm lxxiii. 2, Prov. xvii. 3). Ps. cxix has four verses—namely, 15, 47, 113, and 146—having four words each (*Massora*, Ps. cxix. 47: *Mf.* 75, 17).

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(To be continued.)

<sup>1</sup> Vide particularly *Ochla*, Nos. 39, 164, 171-175, 179, 194, 225-230, 268, 274-282, 286-288, 296-360, 362-365, 374; *Massoretisches Wörterbuch*, pp. 373-381. The *Massorah* follows, on the whole, in its arrangement the *Massora finalis*; the above-mentioned book, the *Massoretisches Wörterbuch*, can therefore be used. It is rather more difficult, as we have done, to look out the needful passages from the register to vol. II. But, having regard to the space at our disposal, we can only give a small fragment. After some study of the Massoretic material, the corresponding data can easily be found in these four collections. We, therefore, refer to this only occasionally. *Ochla* is the handiest of them, but contains, comparatively, the fewest data; which proves that, in the course of centuries, the Massoretic material has increased also in this respect. We do not especially cite Frensdorff's notes.